

**To: Appropriations Transportation Subcommittee members**

**Subject: Keep Shore Line East funding in the Governor's budget**

Esteemed members of the Appropriations Transportation Subcommittee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit my testimony. As a resident of New London, I would like to urge you to keep the current level of Shore Line East service in the state budget. I visit Greenwich, CT frequently to visit family members (especially my young grandsons!), and commuter rail offers a great alternative to driving the heavily traveled I-95 corridor.

I am concerned that in a tight budget year, the Governor's transportation funds for Shore Line East service will be cut to 50% of current levels. If we continue to prioritize car transportation over rail, Southeastern Connecticut – our citizens, businesses and environment – will suffer due to reduced access as well as from crowded conditions on our roadways.

I think keeping SLE service in the budget is important because:

**New London's benefits from current rail investments need to be maintained.** Extending weekend SLE service to New London has paid off, and we now are home to the third busiest weekend train station, behind New Haven and Old Saybrook. If adequate commuter rail is available, the residents of southeastern Connecticut will utilize it. However, service reductions or raising fares will set regional rail travel backwards, perhaps irrevocably, as riders are forced to habituate to less desirable alternatives.

**Investing in automobiles is a losing proposition in our changing world.** One car traveling between New London and New Haven generates 1,848 lbs. of carbon dioxide and 84 lbs. of pollution every month and consumes approximately 50 gallons of gas. Expanding – not reducing – public transportation will help protect the environment for future generations.

**Commuter rail provides job opportunities for our region's residents.** Connecticut is one of the few states where residents can enjoy a high living standard with public transportation to job hubs like Stamford, New York and New Haven. Millennials in particular are seeking out cities where they don't need to own a car, so let's capitalize on this trend and reverse population loss.

**Thank you,**

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ronna Stuller". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

**Ronna Stuller  
19 Evergreen Avenue, New London, CT 06320**